



Placer County
 Planning Services Division
 775 North Lake Boulevard
 P.O. Box 1909
 Tahoe City, CA 96145

Ascent Environmental, Inc.
 455 Capitol Mall, Suite 300
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Date: December 21, 2015
 To: Ms. Stacy Wydra and Ms. Fran Ruger
 From: The League to Save Lake Tahoe
 Re: **Comments on Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report and Request for Recirculation**

Dear Ms. Wydra and Ms. Ruger,

The League to Save Lake Tahoe (the League) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIR). Due to the numerous insufficiencies and inadequacies of this DEIR, we feel strongly that it must be revised and recirculated. The League's comment letter details specifics as to why the DEIR is flawed. The League hereby incorporates and references the comment letter submitted on December 18, 2015 by Sierra Watch and Mountain Area Preservation as well as their traffic expert analysis conducted by Mr. Neal Liddicoat. Outlined below are the most egregious reasons as to why the DEIR must be recirculated as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The associated comment letter contextualizes these and other issues related to the review:

- **Several cumulative impacts and mitigation portions of the assessment conclude that there will be significant impacts, but they are unavoidable so are dismissed. This reoccurring level of review is unjustifiable. A project cannot have several significant impacts without appropriate mitigation.**
- **DEIR ignored the cumulative impacts from an adjacent proposed project (Brockway) and potential impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin impacts. It also ignored regional planning requirements of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Bi-State Compact and Regional Plan Update.**
- **DEIR does not assess potential environmental impacts because it arbitrarily assumes a "project site" and hypothetical development rights. These cannot substitute the need for a true environmental review.**
- **DEIR used arbitrary assumptions to deduce several "less than significant" impacts under land use and biological resources sections of the DEIR.**

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- The Specific Plan details using the Fibreboard Freeway as an emergency access route for the development project. This is the only point of access for Brockway. This will be incredibly problematic in the case of an emergency.
- Wildfire threats were not adequately analyzed or appropriately mitigated.
- DEIR lacks coordination efforts with TRPA and Caltrans. Both of these agencies will be negatively impacted by the Specific Plan project.
- Traffic analysis discrepancies between Specific Plan and Squaw Valley DEIRs when they are in the same geographical location and both analyzed by Ascent Environmental call for recirculation.
- Surveys are not included for both wildlife and plant species for actual potential impacts assessments.

I026-1
cont.

For these reasons and the others discussed in the comment letter, the League requests that the DEIR be revised and recirculated addressing all of the League, Sierra Watch, and Mountain Area Preservation concerns.

Sincerely,
Darcie Collins, PhD
Executive Director
League to Save Lake Tahoe

Enclosures

2015.12.21 League to Save Lake Tahoe Comments on Martis Specific Plan DEIR
2015.9.17 League to Save Lake Tahoe Comments on Brockway Campground



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 Re: **Comments on Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report and Request for Recirculation**

Dear Ms. Wydra and Ms. Ruger,

The League to Save Lake Tahoe (the League) appreciates both the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Martis Valley West Specific Plan (Specific Plan) as well as the extension to the commenting period. The Specific Plan proposal as it is presented today follows years of discussions and negotiations. Mountainside Partners (project proponent) has incorporated a conservation component as part of the Specific Plan proposal as a result of these negotiations. However, the DEIR itself is significantly insufficient in its overall environmental analysis, assessment of cumulative impacts of a future project associated with the project proponent, and ignores a true assessment of potential Lake Tahoe Basin impacts. It is for these reasons the League requests a revision and recirculation of the DEIR so that it achieves the necessary California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements. The following comments detail how the DEIR:

- I. **Does not assess potential environmental impacts because it arbitrarily assumes a "project site" and hypothetical development rights. These cannot substitute the need for a true environmental review under CEQA.**
- II. **Violates CEQA by ignoring cumulative impacts associated with the future Brockway proposal.**
- III. **Does not include an analysis of potential impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin.**
- IV. **In general has inadequate mitigation measures and specifically for the Lake Tahoe Basin. Should have more discussion of the alternative(s) assessment.**
- V. **Has general deficiencies in impact assessment, specifically relating to transportation and circulation and biological resources.**
- VI. **Should be revised and recirculated as allowed by CEQA because it is inadequate and flawed.**

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Background

The Specific Plan proposal put forth by the project proponent is a result of years of negotiations, public comment, and agency input. The League had been engaged by the project proponent in early 2012 to discuss the project and its associated conservation easement because a portion of the original project was within the Lake Tahoe Basin. The League and other conservation groups such as Mountain Area Preservation (MAP), Sierra Watch, and Sierra Club participated in discussions relating to the appropriateness of development entitlements for the project coupled with a significant amount of environmental conservation. The original project proposal spanned what is now designated as the West Parcel in the Specific Plan of Martis Valley and a 112.8 acre portion of the Lake Tahoe Basin, which would have required Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) approval. It also included what is to be designated as conservation as the East Parcel of the Specific Plan.¹

The original proposal had essentially three planning components. The first and second components were the West Parcel located in Martis Valley within Placer County (1,052 acres) and the Lake Tahoe Basin (112.8 acres) parcel, both of which would have been the location site for development. The development project included 760 units and 6.6 acres of commercial property spanning both Placer County and TRPA jurisdictions. The project proponent sought a Resort Recreation designation through an Area Plan under the TRPA Regional Plan Update (RPU) for the Lake Tahoe Basin portion of development. The third component was the East Parcel which included a designation as conservation for over 6,000 acres of open space in Martis Valley.² The project proponent ignored guidance given by the League and other conservation groups in delaying the Lake Tahoe Basin development and establishing environmental targets as required by the RPU for Area Plans. Neither the Resort Recreation designation or Area Plan were redevelopment opportunities envisioned by the RPU. There was significant public and TRPA Governing Board pushback when the first Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the original project was released in May of 2014. While the League supported the overall concept of conservation for the East Parcel within Martis Valley, the League did not find that the Lake Tahoe Basin portion of the project complied with TRPA RPU goals and policies. The significant criticism surrounding the original proposal resulted in the project proponents temporarily eliminating the Lake Tahoe Basin development.

The project proponent shifted the 760 units and 6.6 acres of commercial development from the original Placer County and Lake Tahoe Basin project site to only the Placer County jurisdiction. This is what has now created the Specific Plan that is discussed in the DEIR. The Specific Plan is directly adjacent to the Lake Tahoe Basin parcels that were part of the original project proposal. The revised NOP for the Specific Plan was released in February of 2015. The project proponents have continuously touted their gesture in removing the Lake Tahoe Basin component of the Specific Plan.³ However, in July of 2015 the project proponent applied for a new TRPA permit for the Lake Tahoe Basin parcel for Brockway campground (Brockway). The Brockway campground permit will seek approval from the TRPA for a 550-site developed campground including tent sites, camper sites, permanent shelters, a lodge, meeting pavilions, and other permanent structures.⁴ While the Specific Plan and Brockway projects require separate approval processes, their infrastructure and environmental impacts are intertwined. Not only have they been proposed by the same project proponent, but they very likely will

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be merged into the original project proposal once the infrastructure for both projects has been approved.

The Brockway proposal will require its own environmental analysis under CEQA and the TRPA Bi-State Compact (the Compact). However, the cumulative impacts associated with the Specific Plan and Brockway projects cannot be ignored or bifurcated as has occurred in this DEIR. Not only does CEQA require an analysis of known future projects, but these two projects will share a ridgeline, a road for point of access, public utilities, and the Northstar Fire Department response. The cumulative impacts and potential of eventual project merger require detailed environmental review. As these impacts were ignored, and for the other reasons detailed below, the League requests that this DEIR be revised and recirculated so that an adequate environmental review is completed.

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I. DEIR does not assess potential environmental impacts because it arbitrarily assumes a "project site" and hypothetical development rights. These cannot substitute the need for a true environmental review under CEQA.

The Specific Plan DEIR does not conduct a true environmental review as required by CEQA because it substitutes a net-benefit analysis for the "project site" and shifts hypothetical development rights rather than assessing potential environmental impacts. CEQA requires that an environmental impact review be conducted when there is the potential for a project to substantially degrade the environment.⁵ The DEIR conducted on behalf of the project proponent for Placer County disregards this legal requirement because it does not conduct an actual impact review. The DEIR describes that the proposed project (hereinafter "project site") encompasses both the West and East Parcels and will transfer the 760 units and 6.6 acres of commercial property from "allowable development" of 1,360 units and 6.6 acres of commercial property on the East Parcel to the West Parcel.⁶ The use of this project site and the term "allowable development" frame the arbitrary analysis throughout the DEIR. The assumption is made, as detailed below, that the conservation of the East Parcel coupled with the development of the West Parcel will result in net environmental gains. The other assumption, also detailed below, of the "transfer" of hypothetical allowable development from the East Parcel and comparison to a nonexistent worst case scenario results in net environmental gains. These arbitrary assumptions preclude a CEQA analysis of potential environmental impacts to the West Parcel where actual development will occur.

I026-3

a. Assuming the West and East Parcels of the Specific Plan as one project site resulting in net environmental gain precludes actual analysis of potential environmental impacts to the West Parcel.

The DEIR uses the conservation designation of the East Parcel and reduction of overall development potential in Martis Valley to conclude that a significant portion of the Specific Plan impacts as they relate to the West Parcel are less than significant. The West Parcel exists today as pristine and undeveloped forested land. Concluding that many of the potential impacts would be less than significant because of the conservation of land not near the West Parcel is erroneous and in and of itself constitutes an environmental review under CEQA. This conclusion is highlighted in the very first impact assessment under Land Use Forest Resources, Impact 5-1: Alteration of present or planned land uses,

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"The proposed [Specific Plan] would establish the planning framework for development of a portion of the West Parcel... and the preservation of... the entirety of the East Parcel. The project would result in the redesignation of 662 acres of the West Parcel from Forest to Residential... Development subsequent to the [Specific Plan] could convert up to 533.1 acres of the West Parcel from forested land to residential, commercial, and recreational development... The 6,160 acres of the East Parcel in Placer County would be preserved as permanent open space... This impact would be **less than significant.**"⁷

This initial framing of an impact relating to the conversion of forest land to development to be less than significant by using a net environmental benefit analysis sets the tone for most of the land use and biological resources sections of the DEIR. This specific impact assessment later concludes:

"As compared to the existing land use designations and zoning, adoption of the [Specific Plan] would reduce the total number of residential units and the density of development in the Martis Valley, and would place development closer to an existing developed area (i.e. Northstar community). The proposed conservation of the East Parcel would also establish a large, contiguous, conservation area... Therefore the [Specific Plan] would be consistent with the intent of the Martis Valley Community Plan [MVCP] and Placer County General Plan and would not result in substantial alteration of the planned uses in the Martis Valley identified in the MVCP. This impact would be **less than significant.**"⁸

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The West Parcel is currently untouched forested land that will be converted for residential and commercial development. Claiming that there will be less than significant impacts in this land use conversion because of the conservation related to the East Parcel is not an adequate environmental review. This generalized pattern of analysis and conclusions are found throughout the DEIR (see endnote 8).⁹

b. Using hypothetical development allowances to establish net environmental gain precludes actual analysis of potential environmental impacts to the West Parcel.

The term *development allowances* used both in the DEIR and often by the project proponent in public hearings when describing the East Parcel is inaccurate and arbitrary. The DEIR relies on the transfer of these allowances from the East Parcel to the West Parcel and a comparison to a "worst case scenario" or hypothetical situation on the East Parcel to avoid actual environmental analysis. The majority of the East Parcel sits in Placer County within the Martis Valley. Under the MVCP the East Parcel is currently zoned for residential and commercial uses. These zoning uses only set forth the designation for *potentially allowable development*. The zoning does not grant or solidify any specific development entitlements or project approvals. Theoretically all zoning nation- and California-wide creates the same type of designations, but does not authorize any direct approval or actual development allowances. Any project on the East Parcel would be subject to the same CEQA requirements for environmental review. A project would also be required to be approved by Placer County. To date, there have not been any projects proposed on the East Parcel. The Specific Plan DEIR description of "the transfer of *development allowances* from the East Parcel to West Parcel" is inaccurate. In reality, the East Parcel will be rezoned or redesignated to conservation while the West Parcel is rezoned or redesignated to residential and commercial. The DEIR uses this "transfer" and a

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hypothetical what-could-have-been development to the East Parcel to conclude many impacts as less than significant. Again, the very first impact assessment that has been described above under Land Use Forest Resources, Impact 5-1: Alteration of present or planned land uses relies on this by concluding,

“The land use changes proposed by the [Specific Plan] would shift development *potential* (emphasis added) from the East Parcel to the West Parcel... and would reduce the total number of allowable residential units... for the East Parcel and allowed under existing zoning... to units on the West Parcel... This would reduce overall density from 2.03 units per acre... to 1.15 units per acre... This impact would be **less than significant**.¹⁰”

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Again, there are no current or future development projects proposed on the East Parcel. Relying on the reduction of hypothetical development units cannot suffice for an environmental assessment of the conversion of forested land to commercial development. This conclusion is made for other impacts in the DEIR (refer to endnote 8). The arbitrary assumptions used to deduce several “less than significant” impacts under land use and biological resources sections of this DEIR alone constitute the need for the recirculation of this review. Ignoring the cumulative impacts and potential Lake Tahoe Basin impacts also support the need for recirculation as detailed below.

II. DEIR violates CEQA by ignoring cumulative impacts associated with the future Brockway proposal.

The cumulative impacts associated with the Specific Plan and Brockway cannot be ignored or bifurcated. Both the project proponent and Placer County claim that the projects are unrelated and will require separate review processes. This is inaccurate for reasons already discussed. The projects are being brought forth by the same project proponent and will share the same infrastructure. The Specific Plan details using the Fibreboard Freeway as an emergency access route for the development project on the West Parcel.¹¹ The Fibreboard Freeway is the only point of access for the Brockway proposal.¹² In the result of an emergency (e.g., wildfire, which is common to the area), if both projects were only at half capacity, 650 vehicles and individuals could potentially be flooding the same point of exit. This would not include employees of the projects. At full capacity during an emergency thousands of people could potentially be evacuating on one single lane road. The two projects will also rely upon the same police and fire departments. Access to both projects come from SR 267, which will undoubtedly cause cumulative traffic and circulation, air quality, and climate change impacts that have been ignored in this DEIR. They will also use the same public utilities.

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The DEIR details that the “list” approach is used for cumulative impact analyses to satisfy CEQA. The “list” approach requires the identification of actual projects that may contribute to a cumulative effect.¹³ The DEIR attempts to satisfy this requirement by listing the Brockway project in a future project table and concluding that, “This list of projects was considered in the development and analysis of the cumulative setting and impacts for most resource topics within the geographic scope of each resource topic.¹⁴” This is not an adequate conclusion as detailed below for a cumulative impact assessment associated with Brockway because the assessment was ignored. CEQA requires an environmental impact review be conducted for a project that, “has possible environmental effects that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. ‘Cumulatively considerable’ means that the incremental effects

of an individual project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of... probable future projects.^{15"} It is clear that the Brockway project is more than probable as an application has been submitted by the same project proponent for the Specific Plan. Listing Brockway as a future project and concluding there will not be cumulative impacts does not suffice for a cumulative assessment of potential impacts. The comments below detail how the cumulative impacts for the Specific Plan and Brockway projects were not analyzed.

a. DEIR recognizes Brockway could be constructed simultaneously with the Specific Plan, but cumulative environmental impacts of the two projects are not analyzed.

Simply listing Brockway as a future project does not determine if the Specific Plan will have incremental effects to it or vice versa. The geographical location of these projects (being immediately adjacent to each other) and use of the same infrastructure will have cumulative impacts to the environment. The DEIR acknowledges under Cumulative Impact 13-5: Cumulative short term construction noise,

"Because the West Parcel development area is relatively isolated and, with the exception of the Brockway Campground project....With regard to the Brockway Campground Project, although timing of environmental review, approval, and construction of the project is unknown, it is possible that if campground construction were to occur simultaneously with future phases of the [Specific Plan], construction noise from vehicles and heavy equipment could cumulatively combine....the Brockway Campground construction project and the [Specific Plan] project's cumulative short-term construction-generated noise impacts would be **less than significant**."^{16"}

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It is clear from this one impact assessment alone that the project proponents do envision the real possibility of simultaneous construction and the potential for cumulative impacts associated with both of these projects. However, the remainder of the DEIR ignores this assumption. Brockway is rarely mentioned through the other cumulative impact assessments, and if it is, the impacts are deemed less than significant as displayed above. What is most alarming is where the cumulative analysis is completely ignored. This occurs in the cumulative impacts for employee housing, biological resources, visual impacts, transportation and circulation, air quality, greenhouse gases, soils, water quality, public utilities, and hazards.¹⁷ While all of these deficiencies are listed under endnote 17 it is important to specifically highlight traffic and hazards as these areas are where cumulative impacts associated with both projects will be significant.

The impact analysis for the transportation and circulation section of the DEIR highlights the area with the most significant and unavoidable impacts. The mitigation measures alone are problematic which will be discussed later. What is also extremely problematic with this particular section is the blatant disregard for the Brockway project. The cumulative impact and mitigation portion of the assessment concludes that many impacts would not only be cumulatively considerable with significant impacts, but that are also unavoidable. As already discussed, both the Specific Plan and Brockway projects will be accessed off of SR 267. As highlighted above the simultaneous construction and the general existence of these projects is highly probable. The cumulative analysis for transportation and circulation does not even mention Brockway. This is inadequate for a sufficient environmental review. It can be logically assumed that there will be a general increase to traffic and impacts to circulation with the construction

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and completion of the adjacent project. The DEIR must be reassessed to complete an actual cumulative analysis.

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The cumulative analysis as it relates to hazards also ignores the Brockway project. The location of the Specific Plan and Brockway is home to a constant threat of wildland fires. With continued droughts in both the states of California and Nevada, the area is more susceptible than ever. An emergency route for the Specific Plan project is the only point of access for the Brockway project. The cumulative impacts relating to an emergency evacuation plan and exposure of people or structures to wildland fire hazards not only ignores Brockway, but concludes that the Specific Plan would not result in a considerable contribution to cumulative effects.¹⁸ Regardless of evacuating on the same road, both of these projects will situate thousands of individuals in a secluded forested area. Ignoring Brockway and deducing no cumulative impacts to wildfire safety make the DEIR inadequate. The DEIR also ignores potential impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin, which the League and its members are dedicated to protecting.

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III. DEIR does not include an analysis of potential impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The League is the oldest environmental advocacy organization within Lake Tahoe and has a vested interest in protecting it. The location of the Specific Plan is in very close proximity to the lake itself and abuts the actual Basin boundaries. Yet the DEIR ignores potential environmental impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. The DEIR concludes that there will be several significant and unavoidable impacts to the region, specifically as they relate to: visual impacts, traffic and circulation, air quality, and greenhouse gases¹⁹. Many of these will have significant impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. While the Specific Plan lies outside of TRPA's jurisdiction, the fact that it will negatively impact the Compact thresholds requires coordination between Placer County and TRPA. The Specific Plan is not in compliance with many of the TRPA's RPU goals and policies that seek to improve threshold attainment. Disregard of Lake Tahoe Basin policy and impacts to its unique environment call for a recirculation of the DEIR.

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a. The Specific Plan will have several negative impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin.

The DEIR either ignores a true analysis of potential impacts to the Lake Tahoe environment or states that there will be no impact throughout the assessment without explanation. The Specific Plan will raise Lake Tahoe issues relating to affordable housing, increased vehicle miles traveled (VMTs), general traffic and level of service (LOS) concerns, increased greenhouse gases associated with increase vehicle use, visual impacts, and wildfire safety.

i. Affordable housing

The DEIR explains how the Specific Plan will bring in an influx of full-time employment (FTE) opportunities to Placer County. It does not assess where these employees will be coming from (relocating or local) nor where they will be living. Under the Population, Employment, and Housing Impact 6-3: Provision of employee housing it states,

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"The project is expected to generate between 66.58 and 122.68 new FTE. Consistent with Placer County General Plan housing Policy C-2, the project must provide housing or an in-

lieu fee to support housing for half the total FTE. [The Specific Plan] Policies LU-HS1 through LU-HS5 require the project to comply with this requirement, which is anticipated to be met by payment of the in-lieu fee. Because the employee housing requirement would be met by a County-approved method, this impact would be **less than significant**.²⁰

This impact assessment assumes that the FTE will be living within Placer County outside of the Lake Tahoe Basin. If it does not make this assumption, it simply ignores the possibility of employees living within the Basin. Many FTE within Placer County and Lake Tahoe typically rely on affordable housing which is scarce. There is a significant lack of affordable housing in North Lake Tahoe generally. By increasing employment opportunities without associated employee housing, the project proponents place the burden of affordable housing opportunities on both Placer County and other North Lake Tahoe jurisdictions. Without the necessary housing, FTE will be traveling from both Placer County and North and South Lake Tahoe, which will increase general VMTs. Any in-lieu fee to Placer County for housing requirements does not guarantee that improvements would happen in the Lake Tahoe Basin. It is unclear how the Specific Plan will impact affordable housing and FTE VMTs to the Lake Tahoe Basin as it was not addressed in the DEIR.

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ii. Transportation and Circulation

The most obvious impact to Lake Tahoe that was dismissed in the DEIR is to transportation and circulation. The DEIR recognizes that the Specific Plan will worsen an already problematic traffic condition to Lake Tahoe. It provides insufficient mitigation for exacerbating this problem and the project proponents will again place the burden on both Placer County and the TRPA to resolve these issues. The DEIR states that the Specific Plan will drop the LOS for the segment of the SR267 to SR 28 (segment within Lake Tahoe Basin in Kings Beach) and that the impact cannot be mitigated. It states,

"The project would pay traffic impact fees that could be used for those portions of SR 267 located within Placer County. The Placer County Capital Improvement Program [CIP] does not include widening of SR 267 from Brockway Summit to SR 28; therefore, there would be no feasible mitigation for the significant impact of the project on the roadway segment from the Project Access Roadway to SR 28."²¹

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This impact and lack of any mitigation to increased traffic to the Lake Tahoe Basin is unacceptable. TRPA is mandated by the Compact to maintain and improve threshold attainment. The Specific Plan impacts to traffic and circulation prevent TRPA's ability to attain several thresholds. Increased traffic results in increased VMTs and greenhouse gases and air quality degradation to the Basin. More discussion relating to the general inadequate traffic analysis is provided in following comments. However, it must be noted that the review must include appropriate mitigation to the Lake Tahoe Basin and not force the problem onto the TRPA.

iii. Visual Impacts

The DEIR concludes that there will be no visual impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin without thorough discussion as to how this conclusion was reached. The League was invited out on a boat by the

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project proponents to attempt to view balloons from the Specific Plan location. However, it was an incredibly windy day that prevented accurate assessment. The DEIR uses visual simulations to conclude that development associated with the proposed project would have very minor effects on scenic vistas of the lake.²² The League requests clarification as to how these deductions were made.

TRPA has very strict scenic guideline standards for view corridors within the Lake Tahoe Basin. The RPU requires that, "Regional building and community design criteria shall be established to ensure attainment of the scenic thresholds, maintenance of desired community character, compatibility of land uses, and coordinated project review."²³ Again, while the Specific Plan lies outside of the Basin, it has the very real potential of impacting scenic viewsheds within it, so it must meet these standards.

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iv. Wildfire and Emergency Safety

The threat of wildfires is very real and something that impacts the Lake Tahoe Basin regularly. The DEIR itself states that the Specific Plan will increase traffic problems within the Basin without providing mitigation. With a general population increase associated with the Specific Plan it is inevitable that evacuation in a fire emergency event would impact the Lake Tahoe Basin. The increased probability of a fire starting within the forested area is also inevitable. The DEIR concludes in an impact assessment that the exposure of people or structure to wildland fire hazards is **potentially significant**.²⁴ Again, impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin as it relates to this hazard were ignored. The mitigation measure for this impact is weak, as will be discussed in more detail below, by only increasing staff at the NFD station without any discussion as to how this could be implemented.²⁵ There must be an adequate evaluation of wildfire safety impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin.

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b. DEIR ignores TRPA RPU goals and polices. Placer County and TRPA must coordinate on the planning efforts of the Specific Plan and associated environmental review.

Placer County has a legal obligation to consult with TRPA under CEQA. CEQA requires lead agencies to consult with other agencies who have jurisdiction over resources that could be impacted.²⁶ As already discussed there will be impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin that have been ignored. The TRPA has adopted and implemented the RPU to incentivize economic redevelopment to foster environmental restoration. The RPU intends to direct redevelopment into urbanized areas, improve transportation efforts, provide the opportunity for community input, and accelerate threshold attainment. The Specific Plan and associated DEIR ignore this planning document and efforts. While the Specific Plan lies outside of TRPA's jurisdiction TRPA has the authority to coordinate planning efforts through the RPU. It specifically states,

I026-14

"Where necessary for the realization of the Regional Plan the agency may engage in collaborative planning with local governmental jurisdictions located outside the region, but contiguous to its boundaries. The TRPA Governing Board shall initiate all collaborative planning efforts that are authorized by this policy."²⁷

The TRPA Governing Board has taken its role seriously as it relates to this policy in 2015. Following the release of a draft environmental review of another Placer County project, Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan (Squaw Valley), which also ignored potential impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin, the Governing Board directed TRPA staff to coordinate planning efforts for near Basin projects. To the credit of both Placer County and TRPA staff, strides have been made in how to coordinate future environmental reviews to ensure near Basin projects consider RPU and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) initiatives and modeling.²⁸ However, this Specific Plan DEIR was being drafted before this agreement between TRPA and Placer County was complete. This DEIR replicates the same deficiencies as the Squaw Valley DEIR by ignoring significant Lake Tahoe Basin impacts as discussed above and not providing sufficient mitigation measures as they related to the Lake Tahoe Basin discussed below. The League submitted extensive comments relating to the Brockway project and how that project violates seventeen RPU goals and policies. These goals and policies are listed in endnote 29.²⁹ (See *enclosure League Comment Letter Re: Brockway Campground*). The League hereby incorporates that letter into this DEIR review as the Specific Plan violates all of the same goals and policies. The League made the request at the December 16, 2015, TRPA Governing Board that TRPA and Placer County coordinate on this environmental review.³⁰ Placer County must coordinate with TRPA in reconsidering the environmental impacts associated with the Specific Plan to the Lake Tahoe Basin in a recirculated environmental review.

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IV. DEIR in general has inadequate mitigation measures and specifically for the Lake Tahoe Basin. DEIR should have more discussion of the alternative(s) assessment.

The DEIR asserts many significant impacts without appropriate mitigation or concludes that the impacts are unavoidable. Not only is this problematic for implementation of the Specific Plan generally, but particularly as it relates to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Weak mitigation measures and lack of real alternative discussion will have long-term detrimental environmental impacts if the project and its review are not reassessed.

a. DEIR lacks overall adequate mitigation measures and ignores the Lake Tahoe Basin.

There are a total of thirteen significant impacts listed in the DEIR. Of these significant impacts (and one potentially significant impact) seven are found to be significant and unavoidable.³¹ This is alarming in itself, but particularly for the traffic and greenhouse gas impacts that are found unavoidable. In short, the DEIR concludes the environmental situation as it relates to traffic and greenhouse gases is already problematic and while the Specific Plan will exacerbate these problems, the project proponent will do nothing to mitigate. The attempts at actual mitigations are weak. There is reference to making in-lieu fee and mitigation contributions to alleviate traffic concerns, but no discussion as to how these fees will mitigate actual impacts to the location surrounding the Specific Plan. The fees will feed into Placer County CIPs but again, none specifically designated within the general surrounding location of the Specific Plan.³² None of these attempts will mitigate traffic impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. The mitigation measures also rely heavily on not having the authority to mitigate impacts to roads that are owned by Caltrans even though the Specific Plan will degrade their LOS.³³ At the Placer County DEIR public hearing, project proponents and Placer County were asked by a Planning Commissioner why Caltrans was not present or part of the Specific Plan planning efforts to which the project proponent

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had no response.³⁴ Considering the significant traffic impacts that will be created by the Specific Plan, actual mitigation measures and coordination with Caltrans is necessary. The DEIR cites that cumulative impacts as they relate to greenhouse gases are unavoidable while again ignoring the Lake Tahoe Basin.³⁵ This must also be reassessed. Finally, the project proponents agree to pay mitigation fees to help fund additional fire protection staff for the NFD, but does not include information on implementation. It is unclear whether NFD has the capacity for increased staff, the appropriate housing, or ability to successfully implement this mitigation measure.³⁶ All of these mitigation attempts, or lack thereof, must be reanalyzed.

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b. DEIR lacks real discussion of alternatives.

The DEIR's discussion relating to the possible alternatives lacks realistic possibilities in its analysis. It is evident that a minimum amount of effort was put forth to satisfy CEQA requirements. Alternative 1 (no project alternative) and Alternative 2 (no project – MNVP Alternative) are essentially the same alternative because in both the Specific Plan would not move forward and the existing zoning designations would remain as is. Alternative 2 alludes that the possibility of a project on the East Parcel would remain, although as already discussed to date no project for this area has been presented.³⁷ Alternative 3 would be a reduced density alternative and would reduce the Specific Plan as proposed by 45 percent (a reduction of 342 units).³⁸ The DEIR concludes that this alternative is the environmentally superior alternative and would achieve the same project objectives.³⁹ However, there is no discussion relating to the economic feasibility of this alternative to be implemented. This information must be included for Alternative 3 to be considered an actual alternative. Alternative 4 is the final alternative that includes a reduction of the project's overall footprint, but would include a hotel. This alternative also does not include an economic feasibility analysis and includes a significant amount of environmental impact "unknowns."⁴⁰ The analysis weighs heavily on supporting the preferred alternative by ignoring meaningful and thorough discussion of possible alternatives.

IO26-16

The League recommends the same alternative suggested by Sierra Watch and MAP. This would reduce the project size and include a new point of access point for the project. Instead of a new access from SR 267 to the Specific Plan, the project proponent would seek an easement for roadway access through Highlands View Drive. This alternative would also include a conservation easement of the Lake Tahoe Basin property where the Brockway project has been proposed. This alternative would greatly reduce the amount of environmental impacts and provide much more adequate mitigation measures. This would alleviate a significant amount of the League's concerns relating to the Lake Tahoe Basin.

V. DEIR has general deficiencies to impact assessment, specifically relating to transportation and circulation and biological resources.

While the DEIR is inadequate for reasons already discussed, the rest of these comments focus on the general deficiencies in the transportation and circulation and biological resources sections. These deficiencies are significant generally, but also particularly to the Lake Tahoe Basin.

IO26-17

a. *Transportation and circulation section makes inaccurate assumptions and conclusions, does not mitigate impacts to Lake Tahoe, does not coordinate with Caltrans, and is inconsistent with assumptions made in Squaw Valley DEIR.*

The traffic and circulation section of the DEIR makes inadequate assumptions and conclusions while also ignoring real mitigation measures. The League incorporates by reference the "Review of Transportation and Circulation analysis Martis Valley West Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report" written by Mr. Neal K. Liddicoat for MAP and Sierra Watch. This document highlights the inaccuracies with assumptions and conclusions in detail. As already discussed, the DEIR concludes several significant and unavoidable impacts and does not attempt to discuss meaningful mitigation. Mr. Liddicoat also comments on this and points out specifically in relationship to the DEIR and decrease in LOS in five segments,

"We note that these impacts were identified in the DEIR, but the magnitude of the impacts was substantially understated, so that the public was deprived of information concerning the true impacts of the proposed project...Further, we note that each of these impacts have been defined as significant and unavoidable, so no mitigation will be implemented (or even attempted) to resolve these major deficiencies. It is inappropriate for the DEIR preparers to, in effect, walk away from these findings without making a great effort to reduce or eliminate the traffic impacts. Mitigation options certainly exist-reduced project size or greater transit usage for example... In any event, the DEIR traffic impact analysis is significantly flawed and must be corrected. The revised analysis must then be recirculated for public review and comment."⁴¹

1026-17
cont.

This expert analysis agrees that the DEIR impact analysis and lack of adequate mitigation measures results in a flawed assessment. Both the DEIR and Mr. Liddicoat conclude that impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin are going to be significant. Specifically, the intersection at SR 267 and SR 28 which is within Kings Beach (North Lake Tahoe region) will be significantly negatively impacted.⁴² Mr. Liddicoat explains that the situation will be even worse after the trip-generation estimates that he found inadequate are corrected.⁴³ Creating significant and unavoidable impacts without considering real mitigation is inappropriate as concluded both by the League and Mr. Liddicoat.

Another critical component of Mr. Liddicoat's assessment is the DEIR's failure to address impacts to VMTs. He concludes that,

"Careful review of the 'Transportation and Circulation' analysis presented in DEIR Chapter 10 reveals virtually no mention of VMT and certainly no documentation of the assumptions and procedures employed in developing any VMT estimates. In fact, a digital search of the chapter reveals only a single reference to VMT or vehicle miles traveled; that reference occurs in the description of the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan and bears no relationship to the specific travel characteristics of the proposed project. Moreover, despite detailed digital searches of all three chapters (Transportation and Circulation, Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change) we were unable to find any form of VMT estimate for the proposed project."⁴⁴

1026-18

Not only does the DEIR ignore VMT impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin, but also to its overall analysis. This must be corrected for the DEIR to be found adequate.

1026-18
cont.

As already discussed above, there is a general lack of discussion around any coordination efforts with Caltrans. As already cited, CEQA requires consultation with other agencies who have jurisdiction over resources that may be impacted.⁴⁵ Placer County and the project proponent have not satisfied this legal obligation or the one below. A significant portion of the unavoidable impacts as they relate to traffic and circulation cite mitigation as impossible because SR 28 is a Caltrans road. Not coordinating with Caltrans cannot be used as a reason for no mitigation. The Specific Plan will decrease the LOS on a Caltrans road while likely increasing VMTs. Placer County as the lead agency has the legal obligation to coordinate with Caltrans both on planning and any potential mitigation reporting that could impact Caltrans. CEQA requires,

“...the environmental documentation preparation and review should be coordinated in a timely fashion with the existing planning, review, and project approval processes being used by each public agency. These procedures, to the maximum extent feasible, are to run concurrently not consecutively. When the lead agency is a state agency, the environmental document shall be included as part of the regular project report if such a report is used in its existing review and budgetary process.⁴⁶”

1026-19

It also requires in terms of monitoring and reporting that Placer County as the lead agency,

“...should coordinate their mitigation monitoring and reporting programs where possible. Generally, lead and responsible agencies for a given project will adopt separate and different monitoring or reporting programs. This occurs because of any of the following reasons: the agencies have adopted and are responsible for reporting on or monitoring different mitigation measures; the agencies are deciding on the project at different times, each agency has the discretion to choose its own approach to monitoring or reporting, and each agency has its own special expertise.⁴⁷”

Placer County and the project proponent ignored these CEQA responsibilities as it did not include Caltrans as part of the DEIR process and discussion. It is unclear if any Caltrans current or future planning conflict with the Specific Plan transportation analysis or if they have the capacity to be included for mitigation monitoring. These are vital components to an adequate environmental review and their absence alone trigger the need for a recirculation.

Finally the League would like to highlight a discrepancy between the assumptions made in the Specific Plan DEIR and the Squaw Valley DEIR. Both of these DEIRs were produced by the same consultation firm, Ascent Environmental, for Placer County. Having an inconsistent assumption for two projects similarly located with similar development objectives (increase to residential and commercial development) make both of these reviews flawed and inadequate. The assumption relates to second homes.

1026-20

The Specific Plan DEIR assumes,

"The residential units in the Truckee/Lake Tahoe region are unique in character in that many are vacation/second homes and not occupied on a full-time basis. To accurately estimate traffic generated by the proposed residential units, the portion of homes assumed to be second homes analyzed using the Recreational Homes (ITE Code 260) trip generation rates, while the portion of homes that would be occupied full-time were analyzed using their corresponding trip generation rates (i.e., Single Family Housing- 210, Residential Condo/Townhouses -230)... A residential unit split of 80 percent part-time residences and 20 percent full-time residences was assumed for the project and used for the analysis. This assumption is consistent with the Martis Valley Community Plan however; based on current data from other similar subdivisions, it is likely conservative as the percentage of full-time residences is typically lower than 20 percent.^{48"}

This assumption is flawed for multiple reasons. There is no information provided on the statement "based on current data from other similar subdivisions". The public cannot provide meaningful comments if it is not given the necessary data used in creating assumptions. This assumption also does not include the possibilities for vacation rentals. While an owner of a house may only reside there part-time, it is commonplace in Tahoe for owners to rent their house out as a short-term vacation rental when they personally are not using the property. This needs to be included as part of the occupancy assumptions framing the traffic analysis.

I026-20
cont.

This assumption also conflicts with the assumption made in the Squaw Valley DEIR regarding the same unit,

"Recreational Homes (Category 260) – usually located in a resort containing local services and complete recreational facilities. These dwelling units are often second homes used by the owner periodically or rented on a seasonal basis... After reviewing each land use category, the following three land uses were removed from further consideration for reasons stated below... Recreational Homes (Category 260) – this data set features only two observation points and is therefore too limited to use.^{49"}

Considering that Placer County is the lead agency for both of these similar projects and had Ascent Environmental conduct both DEIRs that are within the same geographic location, it is illogical that different assumptions would be made relating to the same units. It cannot be considered in one analysis and discarded in the other. This major inconsistency impacts the outcomes of both DEIRs. Both are inaccurate as they both ignore an analysis of vacation rentals. This inconsistency must be resolved in a recirculated Specific Plan DEIR.

b. *DEIR ignores cumulative impacts as it relates to biological resources and does not properly mitigate. The general conclusions made are based off of incomplete data.*

The League has already detailed the general lack of cumulative impact analysis in this DEIR as it relates specifically to Brockway and it is again worth noting that deficiency in the biological resources section. Plant and animal species do not know the imaginary borders between the Specific Plan and Brockway. Impacts to populations and migratory patterns cannot be bifurcated. The DEIR states,

I026-21

"Through site clearing, preparation, and construction, most of the projects listed in Table 4-2 [i.e. Brockway] would have some incremental effect on biological resources, including impacts to common vegetation and wildlife habitats, sensitive habitats, special-status species introduction and spread of invasive species, or by improving habitats through restoration activities.⁵⁰" Again, the DEIR points out the very real possibility of cumulative impacts, but then does not address Brockway again for the cumulative impact assessment. The DEIR uses the conservation of the East Parcel as a substitute for analyzing impacts to the West Parcel. The five cumulative impacts (loss of common vegetation and wildlife habitats, loss of sensitive habitat, loss of special-status plant species, effects on fish and wildlife, and movement of native resident or migratory wildlife species) conclude there will be no cumulatively considered impacts.⁵¹ An actual cumulative impact assessment must be conducted for these conclusions to be drawn.

IO26-21
cont.

The biological resources section contains incomplete assessments and weak mitigation measures. Several of the individual impact assessments and associated mitigation measures do not have relevant data to make conclusions and rely on future surveys. It is cited multiple times that no protocol-level surveys for wildlife or rare plant species were conducted.⁵² A specific example in an impact assessment the DEIR concludes,

"No special-status plant taxa have been documented on the West Parcel. Four special-status plant species – Galena Creek rockcress, threetip sagebrush, Davy's sedge, and Plumas ivesia – were identified as having a moderate or high *potential to occur on the West Parcel* (emphasis added); these species could also occur within the offsite utilities corridors. No protocol-level surveys for special-status plant species have been conducted to confirm the presence or absence of special-status species on the project site. Therefore, project implementation could affect special-status species, if they are present."⁵³

IO26-22

This level of review is unacceptable. It recognizes that there is a possibility for special-status species yet ignores the necessity for a survey. Surveys for both wildlife and plant special species must be conducted for actual potential impacts to be assessed. The following mitigation measures take a similar approach by citing that surveys will be conducted in the future for mitigation: the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will verify vegetation mapping and the delineation of potential wetlands and other waters of the United States, and preconstruction surveys will be conducted for the nesting of special-status birds, special-status bats, and Sierra Nevada beavers.⁵⁴ All of these surveys should be conducted before certification of the EIR so that potential impacts are analyzed.

The DEIR also significantly downplays potential impacts to the Mule deer and protection of its habitat. The analysis explains that the deer is of high management concern and has been observed in both the East and West Parcels.⁵⁵ However the DEIR later concludes that the population is declining and that fawning does not seem to appear on the West Parcel. It also suggests that the deer have a potential to migrate through the Specific Plan site as they move into and out of the Lake Tahoe Basin.⁵⁶ Considering that the population is declining, rather than dismissing potential impacts, the DEIR should provide mitigation measures protecting potential fawning habitat and migration corridors. This would foster an improvement to the Mule deer populations. This could be accomplished through conservation designation on the Lake Tahoe Basin property as suggested in these comments as an alternative. The

IO26-23

deficiencies in both the transportation and circulation and biological resources sections of this DEIR constitute the need for the DEIR's recirculation.

IO26-23
cont.

VI. DEIR should be revised and recirculated as allowed by CEQA because it is inadequate and flawed.

The League's comments have clearly detailed how the Specific Plan DEIR is inadequate. The DEIR does not assess actual potential impacts to the West Parcel, ignores cumulative impacts associated with Brockway, ignores potential impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin, contains weak mitigation measures, and is technically deficient. CEQA allows for the recirculation of a DEIR when, "the draft EIR was so fundamentally and basically inadequate and conclusory in nature that meaningful public review and comment were precluded."⁵⁷ Some of the most fundamental inadequacies are relisted here:

- **Arbitrary assumptions were used to deduce several "less than significant" impacts under land use and biological resources sections of the DEIR.**
- **Ignoring the cumulative impacts from an adjacent proposed project (Brockway) and potential impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin impacts also support the need for recirculation.**
- **The Specific Plan details using the Fibreboard Freeway as an emergency access route for the development project. This is the only point of access for Brockway. This will be incredibly problematic in the case of an emergency.**
- **Several cumulative impacts and mitigation portions of the assessment conclude that there will be significant impacts, but they are unavoidable so are dismissed. This reoccurring level of review is unjustifiable. A project cannot have several significant impacts without appropriate mitigation.**
- **Wildfire threats were not adequately analyzed or appropriately mitigated.**
- **DEIR lacks coordination efforts with TRPA and Caltrans. Both of these agencies will be negatively impacted by the Specific Plan project.**
- **Traffic analysis discrepancies between Specific Plan and Squaw Valley DEIRs when they are in the same geographical location and both analyzed by Ascent Environmental call for recirculation.**
- **Surveys are needed for both wildlife and plant species to assess actual potential impacts.**

IO26-24

The League has participated in discussions surrounding this project for years and was still unable to provide the appropriate level of input through these comments due to the inadequacy of this DEIR. The critical flaws of the DEIR prevent the public from having the opportunity to sufficiently provide input to the Specific Plan, which is at the heart of CEQA. The League requests a recirculation so that a thorough analysis is completed on potential impacts to the surrounding environment including Lake Tahoe.

Recommendations

The League requests recirculation of the DEIR so that all of the above comments are addressed. The revised and recirculated DEIR should include the following:

IO26-25

- **An actual assessment of potential environmental impacts to the West Parcel. This would not include using the arbitrary allowable development from the East Parcel.**
- **An analysis of cumulative impacts relating to Brockway.**
- **An assessment of potential impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin, including but not limited to: affordable housing, transportation and circulation, visual impacts, biological resources, and hazards.**
- **Adequate mitigation measures and attempts to resolve the amount of significant and avoidable impacts.**
- **Economic feasibility assessment of the environmentally superior alternative and inclusion of newly proposed alternative from conservation groups.**
- **Corrected technical inadequacies throughout the DEIR, specifically the traffic analyses. Resolution of the discrepancy between the Specific Plan and Squaw Valley assumptions.**

IO26-25
cont.

Sincerely,
Shannon Eckmeyer
Policy Analyst
League to Save Lake Tahoe

¹ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan. Preliminary Draft. May 2014. Prepared by East West Partners. 1.3 Plan Authority. p.10.

² Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan. Preliminary Draft. May 2014. Prepared by East West Partners. 6.4 Designated Open Space. p.65.

³ Placer County Planning Commission. November 19, 2015. Public Hearing on Martis Valley West Specific Plan Draft Environmental Review. Transcript/Minutes unavailable when this comment letter was submitted.

⁴ Brockway Campground Minor Use Permit Project Description and Site Design Maps. Submitted to TRPA July 31, 2015. Pages 4,5 of 8.

⁵ § 21000 CCR, Title 4, Chapter 3 (CEQA) §15065(a).

⁶ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Executive Summary. p.2-4.

⁷ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Land Use and Forest Resources. p.5-16.

⁸ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Land Use and Forest Resources. p.5-19

⁹ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Land Use and Forest Resources. p.5-19 – 5-24 & Biological Resources. p.7-49 – 7-61. Specific Impacts (5-2, 5-4, 5-5, 7-3, 7-4,7-5).

¹⁰ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Land Use and Forest Resources. p.5-19.

¹¹ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Project Description. p.3-24.

¹² Brockway Campground Minor Use Permit Project Description. Submitted to TRPA July 31, 2015. Page 6 of 8.

¹³ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Approach to Environmental Analysis. p.4-3.

¹⁴ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Approach to Environmental Analysis. p.4-4

¹⁵ § 21000 CCR, Title 4, Chapter 3 (CEQA) §15065(a)(3)

¹⁶ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Noise. p13-25-13-26.

¹⁷ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Population Employment and Housing, Biological Resources, Visual Resources, Transportation and Circulation, Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Geology and Soils, Hydrology and Water Quality, Public Services and Recreation, Hazards and Hazardous Materials. Specific Impacts include all of the following (6.5, 7.6, 7.7, 7.8, 7.9, 7.10, 9.6, 9.8, all cumulative impacts under 10.3.5, 11.8, 12.4, all cumulative impacts under 14.3.5, 15.8, 17.7, 18.7, 18.18)

¹⁸ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Hazards and Hazardous Materials p.18-23-18-24.

¹⁹ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Executive Summary. Table 2-1 (Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures) p.2-8- 2-100.

²⁰ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Population Employment and Housing. p.6-11

²¹ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Transportation and Circulation. p10-43

²² Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Visual Resources. p.9-37

²³ Regional Plan Update. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. December 12, 2012. Goal CD-2. p.2-22.

²⁴ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Hazards and Hazardous Materials. p.18-20

²⁵ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Hazards and Hazardous Materials. p.18-21

²⁶ § 21000 CCR, Title 4, Chapter 3 (CEQA) §15086(a)(3)

²⁷ Regional Plan Update. Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. December 12, 2012. Goal LU5-2. p.2-19.

²⁸ Tahoe Regional Planning Agency Governing Board Meeting October 28, 2015. Presentation on Coordination with Near Basin projects and associate environmental review. <http://www.trpa.org/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Item-No.-VIII.A.pdf>

²⁹ (1) LU 1-2: Redevelopment Existing Town Centers is a High Priority. "Many of the Region's environmental problems can be traced to past and existing development which often occurred without recognition of the sensitivity of the area's natural resources. To correct this, environmentally beneficial redevelopment and rehabilitation of identified Centers is a priority. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 2: Land Use Element. pg 2-2)

(2) LU 3-3: Development Is Preferred In and Directed Toward Centers, As Identified on the Regional Land Use Map. Centers Shall have the Following Characteristics:

- 1) A concentration of non-residential and mixed-use development at a higher intensity than exists in other areas of the Region.
- 2) Existing or planned transit service.
- 3) Highway access.
- 4) Infill and redevelopment opportunities.
- 5) Capacity for receiving transfers of redevelopment rights and relocations of existing development.
- 6) Existing or planned housing in the vicinity.

7) Existing or planned street designs with continuous sidewalks, paths and other infrastructure that promotes walking, bicycling and transit use so as to encourage mobility without the use of private vehicles (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 2: Land Use Element. pg 2-11)

(3) LU 3-5: Development is Discouraged in and Directed Away From Environmentally-Sensitive Lands and Areas Furthest from *Non-Residential* Support Services. These Areas Are Further Defined in Other Plan Policies. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 2: Land Use Element. pg 2-11)

(4) Goal LU-4: Regional Plan Goals, Policies, and Ordinances Shall be Implemented Using an Integrated System of Regional and Local Government Planning. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 2: Land Use Element. pg 2-11)

(5) Goal CD-2: Regional Building and Community Design Criteria Shall be established to Ensure Attainment of the Scenic Thresholds, Maintenance of Desired Community Character, Compatibility of Land Uses and Coordinated Project Review (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 2: Land Use Element. pg 2-2)

(6) Goal AQ-1: Attain and Maintain Air Quality in the Region at Levels that Are Healthy for Humans and the Ecosystem, Achieve and Maintain Environmental Thresholds and Do Not Interfere with Resident's and Visitors' Visual Experience. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 2: Land Use Element. pg 2-31)

(7) AQ 1.3: Encourage the Reduction of Emissions from Motor Vehicles and other Motorized Machinery in the Region.

Significant emissions of air pollutants including greenhouse gases (GHG) and entrained dust are produced by automobiles and other gas powered machinery in the Region. The Land Use Subelement and the Transportation Element contain Goals and Policies to reduce the amount of air pollution generated from motor vehicles in the Region. Additionally TRPA shall pursue other feasible and cost effective opportunities to reduce emissions from motor vehicles and other gas powered machinery in the Region. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 2: Land Use Element. pg 2-31)

(8) Goal T-1: Promote Walkable Mixed-Use Centers, Transportation Enhancements and Environmental Improvements That increase the Viability of Transit Systems. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 3: Transportation Element. pg 3-2).

(9) Goal T-2: Encourage Bicycle and Pedestrian Usage as Viable and Significant Modes of Transportation at Lake Tahoe. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 3: Transportation Element. pg 3-2).

(10) Goal T-9: Implement Transportation Demand Management (TMD) Measures to Reduce Number of Vehicle Trips on the Region's Highways. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 3: Transportation Element. pg 3-5).

(11) Goal Veg-3: Conserve Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Plant Species and Uncommon Plant Communities of the Lake Tahoe Region. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 4: Conservation Element. pg 4-5).

(12) Goal WL-1: Maintain Suitable Habitats for All Indigenous Species of Wildlife Without Preference to Game or Non-Game Species Through Maintenance and Improvement of Habitat Diversity. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 4: Conservation Element. pg 4-9).

(13) Goal WL-2: Preserve, Enhance, and, where feasible, Expand Habitats Essential for Threatened, Endangered, Rare, or Sensitive Species Found in the Region. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 4: Conservation Element. pg 4-10).

(14) OS-1.2: The Beneficial use of Open Space Shall be protected by Regulating Uses and Restricting Access as Necessary to Maintain Soil Productivity and Acceptable Vegetative Cover. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 4: Conservation Element. pg 4-23).

(15) R-4.5: New Campground Facilities Shall be Located in Areas of Suitable Land Capability and in Proximity to the Necessary Infrastructure.

This strategy would promote the siting of new campgrounds where the least environmental impact can be expected and where the necessary roads and services are easily accessible. Actual site selection will be guided by the policies of this plan and other plans of federal and state agencies. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 5: Recreation Element. pg 5-5).

(16) Goal PS-2: Consider the Existence of Adequate and Reliable Public Services and Facilities in Approving New Development Under the Plan. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 6: Public Services & Facilities Element. pg 6-2).

(17) PS-2.1: No Additional Development Requiring Water Should be Allowed in Any Area Unless it can be Demonstrated That There is Adequate Water Supply within an Existing Water Right. (TRPA Regional Plan. Adopted December 12, 2012. Chapter 6: Public Services & Facilities Element. pg.6-3).

³⁰ League to Save Lake Tahoe Oral Comment. TRPA Governing Board Meeting December 16, 2016.

³¹ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Executive Summary. Table 2-1 (Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures) p.2-8- 2-100.

³² Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Transportation and Circulation. Specific Impacts include (10-1,10-5,10-8, 10-9)

³³ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Executive Summary. Table 2-1 (Summary of Impacts and Mitigation Measures) p.2-8- 2-100.

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- ³⁴ Placer County Planning Commission. November 19, 2015. Public Hearing on Martis Valley West Specific Plan Draft Environmental Review. Transcript/Minutes unavailable when this letter submitted.
- ³⁵ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change. Specific Impact 12-4. p.12-19.
- ³⁶ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Hazards and Hazardous Material. Specific Mitigation Measure 18-4. p.18-21.
- ³⁷ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Alternatives. p.19-10- 19-21.
- ³⁸ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Alternatives. p.19-22.
- ³⁹ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Alternatives. p.19-36.
- ⁴⁰ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Alternatives. p.19-31- 19-35.
- ⁴¹ Review of Transportation and Circulation Analysis Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Neal Liddicoat, P.E., MRO Engineers for Mountain Area Preservation and Sierra Watch. p.14.
- ⁴² Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Transportation and Circulation. p.10-26-10-32.
- ⁴³ Review of Transportation and Circulation Analysis Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Neal Liddicoat, P.E., MRO Engineers for Mountain Area Preservation and Sierra Watch. p.15.
- ⁴⁴ Review of Transportation and Circulation Analysis Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Neal Liddicoat, P.E., MRO Engineers for Mountain Area Preservation and Sierra Watch. p.24.
- ⁴⁵ § 21000 CCR, Title 4, Chapter 3 (CEQA) §15086(a)(3)
- ⁴⁶ § 21000 CCR, Title 4, Chapter 3 (CEQA) §15004(c)
- ⁴⁷ § 21000 CCR, Title 4, Chapter 3 (CEQA) §15097(d)
- ⁴⁸ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Transportation and Circulation. p.10-21.
- ⁴⁹ Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan Draft Environmental Review. Prepared for Placer County by Ascent Environmental. May 2015. Transportation and Circulation. p.9-40.
- ⁵⁰ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Biological Resources. p.7-16.
- ⁵¹ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Biological Resources. p.7-63.
- ⁵² Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Biological Resources. p. 7-3.
- ⁵³ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Biological Resources. p. 7-49.
- ⁵⁴ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Biological Resources. p.7-48-7-60.
- ⁵⁵ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Biological Resources. p.7-33.
- ⁵⁶ Martis Valley West Parcel Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report. Prepared by Ascent Environmental or Placer County. October 22, 2015. Biological Resources. p. 7-35
- ⁵⁷ § 21000 CCR, Title 4, Chapter 3 (CEQA) §15088.5(a)(4)

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IO26

Darcie Collins, PhD, Executive Director
The League to Save Lake Tahoe
December 21, 2015

IO26-1

The comment provides an introduction to the comments in the letter and suggests that the Draft EIR is insufficient and should be recirculated. As discussed in the following responses and Master Response 1, regarding recirculation, the Draft EIR contains a thorough analysis of the potential project-specific and cumulative effects of the proposed MVWPSP Project, and draws conclusions based on substantial evidence; recirculation of the EIR is not warranted. Please see responses to comments IO26-2 through IO26-24.

The comment also incorporates the comment letter submitted by Sierra Watch and Mountain Area Preservation. Please refer to responses to comments in letter IO28.

IO26-2

The comment provides background information on the MVWPSP and the Brockway Campground proposal, and suggests that the Draft EIR does not address the cumulative impacts associated with the Brockway Campground. The Draft EIR considers the Brockway Campground proposal and other cumulative projects, as described in Section 4.2, “Cumulative Impact Analysis Methodology” and as shown on Table 4-2, “Cumulative Projects List,” on page 4-5 of the Draft EIR. Cumulative projects are considered throughout the impact analyses of Chapters 5 through 18 of the Draft EIR; the analysis of cumulative impacts follows the project-specific analyses in each chapter. Except for a short secondary emergency access road segment, the MVWPSP project and proposed Brockway Campground do not share infrastructure. Access to the MVWPSP project and the Brockway Campground are provided on separate roadways. Internal circulation patterns do not intersect. The projects do not share water, sewer, or other utilities. Neither project would be conditioned on approval of the other project in order to go forward. For further discussion regarding the Brockway Campground proposal, see Master Response 2 of this Final EIR.

The comment also suggests that the Draft EIR should be recirculated. Recirculation is not warranted. See Master Response 1.

IO26-3

The comment suggests that the Draft EIR compares impacts to a hypothetical baseline. This statement is incorrect. See Master Response 3 regarding the baseline environmental conditions used to determine the environmental impact conclusions in the Draft EIR. As discussed in Master Response 3, the baseline conditions for the MVWPSP Draft EIR are generally the conditions as they existed at the time that the March 2014 NOP was published. Section 1.3, “Definition of Baseline,” in Chapter 1 of the Draft EIR defines the baseline physical conditions against which Placer County (the lead agency) determined whether an impact was significant. The baseline conditions for each environmental resource topic are described under “Environmental Setting” throughout Chapters 5 through 18 of the Draft EIR.

IO26-4

The comment raises concerns regarding the baseline against which potential environmental impacts are evaluated, stating that it should be based on existing physical conditions. The analysis of impacts is, in fact, based on existing, physical environmental conditions. Please see Master Response 3 regarding the environmental baseline and response to comment IO26-3.

The comment specifically highlights Impact 5-1 of the Draft EIR, but omits the impact analysis in its quotation. Please see Draft EIR for the full text of Impact 5-1, “Alteration of present or planned land uses” (pages 5-16 through 5-19), which specifically discusses existing land uses, land use designations, and zoning and evaluates how the MVWPSP would alter the present and planned land uses on both the East and West Parcels. As a planning document that would supersede the MVCP, the MVWPSP would result in a shift of allowable

residential and commercial development from the East Parcel to the West Parcel. Therefore, a discussion of the existing land use designations, the development potential, and the estimated associated population under the MVCP on the East Parcel is necessary to disclose the land use effects of the project.

In analyzing the physical environmental impacts of the project, the Draft EIR focuses on the existing environmental setting. Thus, for example, the Draft EIR's analysis of biological impacts provides a detailed description of the existing, physical characteristics of the West Parcel based on site-specific surveys and literature review (see Draft EIR, pages 7-1 to 7-35). The analysis does not avoid describing the West Parcel based on the preservation of the East Parcel.

The comment states the West Parcel is "pristine." In using this term, the commenter may be implying that the West Parcel is undisturbed and exhibits no evidence of prior human activities. As the Draft EIR notes, the West Parcel has historically been used for logging activities, and contains roughly five miles of roads and skid trails. In addition, there are approximately 15 miles of trails that are under least to CNL/Vail for their guests to use for cross-country skiing and/or hiking. Most of the West Parcel consists of undeveloped forest land, as noted in the comment.

The comment states the Draft EIR concludes the impacts of development on the West Parcel will be less than significant "because" the East Parcel will be conserved. The Draft EIR does not contain such a conclusion. Impacts on the West Parcel are not considered less than significant because they will be offset by environmental benefits of preserving the East Parcel. Rather, impacts on the West Parcel are considered significant or not based on the project's impacts on the resources that are located there. For example, where impacts on the West Parcel are considered potentially significant, those impacts are offset by mitigation measures that apply to the West Parcel (e.g., Mitigation Measures 7-5a, 7-5b and 7-5c, which require preconstruction surveys, avoidance and buffers around occupied sites).

In assessing whether impacts are significant, the EIR considers, appropriately, whether the habitat that would be disturbed on the West Parcel is regionally widespread such that the impact on the West Parcel would not be significant. In this context, it is appropriate to consider whether such habitat is present and would be preserved on the East Parcel.

Please see the environmental setting sections in each resource chapter of the Draft EIR (Chapters 5 through 18) for definition of the resource-related baseline conditions. The impact analyses then evaluate the project and cumulative impacts of the MVWPSP, which proposes development of the West Parcel and conservation of the East Parcel. Impacts on the West Parcel are not compared to the East Parcel. Rather, the impacts consider the whole of the action, the MVWPSP Project, in its entirety, against existing conditions.

IO26-5

The comment suggests that the Draft EIR compares impacts to a hypothetical baseline. This statement is incorrect. Please see responses to comments IO26-3 and IO26-4, above, and Master Response 3 regarding the environmental baseline.

The comment states that the Draft EIR did not evaluate cumulative impacts. This statement is incorrect. Chapter 4 of the Draft EIR presents the cumulative impact approach and cumulative setting (geographic scope is described in Table 4-1 and cumulative projects are listed in Table 4-2). Cumulative impacts, and the project's contribution to cumulative impacts, are addressed for each environmental resource throughout Chapters 5 through 18 of the Draft EIR.

The comment suggests that the EIR does not analyze impacts to the Tahoe Basin. This is not the case. To the degree that project impacts affect the Tahoe Basin specifically (e.g., traffic

generation), or as part of the greater region (e.g., air quality, GHGs) those impacts are assessed and disclosed. Because the project is located outside the Tahoe Basin and outside the jurisdiction of TRPA, the analysis does not address the unique regulatory requirements of TRPA (e.g., TRPA goals, policies, and environmental threshold carrying capacities).

In addition, the cumulative projects listed in Table 4-2, “Cumulative Projects List,” on page 4-5 of the Draft EIR, include related projects in the Tahoe Basin. These projects are considered in the cumulative impact analyses throughout Chapters 5 through 18 of the Draft EIR; the analysis of cumulative impacts follows the project-specific analyses in each chapter.

Finally, some of the language cited in the comment (e.g., “development allowances”) is from public testimony provided at project hearings by the project applicant and is not included in the Draft EIR. The term “development allowance” refers to the transfer of density authorized in the MVCP from the East Parcel to the West Parcel. This statement is accurate: the project proposes to eliminate residential and commercial designations on the East Parcel and to move those designations to the West Parcel. Such zoning does not ensure that development will take place. Such zoning does, however, establish policy with respect to the density and intensity of development that is envisioned.

IO26-6 The comment suggests that the Draft EIR does not sufficiently address the cumulative impacts associated with the Brockway Campground. For discussion regarding the Brockway Campground proposal and response to concerns regarding segmentation of environmental review and cumulative analyses, see Master Response 2 of this Final EIR. The conclusions of the cumulative analyses include consideration of the Brockway Campground proposal, and not all of the analyses determine that no cumulative impacts would occur.

The comment states the MVWPSP and the Brockway Campground will use the same infrastructure. This comment is incorrect. The MVWPSP and the Brockway Campground would (if both projects are approved) share a road segment identified as secondary emergency access for the MVWPSP. This road segment would not be used to provide non-emergency access to, or circulation within, the MVWPSP. With this exception, the MVWPSP and the Brockway Campground do not share infrastructure. Water, sewer and dry utility systems would be separate. On- and off-site roads would not intersect (except for the secondary emergency access noted above, which would be used only in the event it is needed for emergency evacuation).

IO26-7 The comment addresses traffic mitigation measures and the inclusion of the Brockway Campground proposal in the cumulative analysis. Please see responses to comments 18-23 and IO26-11 and Master 2 regarding the separate Brockway Campground proposal.

IO26-8 The comment raises concerns regarding wildland fires and emergency evacuation. Please see Master Response 9 of this Final EIR related to wildland fire, emergency evacuation, and the draft Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Plan prepared as part of the MVWPSP. For further discussion regarding the Brockway Campground proposal and responses to concerns regarding segmentation of environmental review, see Master Response 2 of this Final EIR.

The comment also suggests that the Draft EIR does not address impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Please see response to comments IO26-5 and IO18-7 and Master Response 2.

IO26-9 The comment asserts that the Draft EIR does not address impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Please see response to comments IO26-5 and IO18-7 as well as Master Response 4 (regarding the visual impact analysis), Master Response 6 (regarding VMT), and Master Response 9 (regarding emergency evacuation). As described in response to comment IO26-5, above, the geographic scope of the impact analyses includes regional effects beyond the

immediate project area, including the Tahoe Basin. As suggested in the comment, coordination has occurred and will continue between Placer County and TRPA regarding the MVWPSP project (see Letter RA1 from TRPA).

The comment states the MVWPSP is not in compliance with TRPA RPU goals and policies. To the extent this comment implies that these goals and policies apply to the project, this statement is incorrect. The MVWPSP is not located in the area subject to TRPA jurisdiction. The Draft EIR does, however, analyze the extent to which the project has the potential to affect resources located within the Tahoe Basin. For a discussion of workforce housing and affordable housing, please see response to comment IO51-6.

- IO26-10 The comment raises concerns regarding affordable (workforce) housing needs generated by the project. As explained in Impact 6-3 of the Draft EIR, “Provision of employee housing,” the MVWPSP is expected to generate between 66.58 and 122.68 new full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. Consistent with Placer County General Plan Housing Policy C-2, the project must provide housing or an in-lieu fee to support housing for half the total FTE (between 33.29 and 61.34). MVWPSP Policies LU-HS1 through LU-HS5 require the project to comply with this requirement. As explained in response to comment LA6-1, the proposed MPWPSP has been revised to include dedication of land to Placer County within the project site instead of payment of in lieu fees for provision of affordable housing. This would be consistent with Placer County General Plan Policy C-2. The dedicated land, which would not be located in the Tahoe Basin, would be restricted to workforce housing development and could contain up to 21 units. Those units would be subtracted from the total proposed unit count of 760 for the proposed development, so the total number of units allowed within the plan area would remain 760. Because the employee housing requirement would be met by one of the County-approved methods, Impact 6-3 would remain less than significant. See Chapter 2, “Revisions to the Draft EIR,” for revisions to Impact 6-3 and a discussion of the project change’s effects on the other analyses contained in the Draft EIR.

The cumulative employee housing impact (Cumulative Impact 6-6) addresses projects in the region, which include Martis Valley, the Town of Truckee (in Nevada County), the North Shore of Lake Tahoe, and Squaw Valley (see the list of cumulative projects in Table 4-2 of the Draft EIR). The description of both Placer County’s and Truckee’s workforce housing requirements in the cumulative impact discussion addresses how the cumulative projects’ employee housing requirements are met in Placer County (including the Lake Tahoe portion of Placer County) and in Truckee.

The comment also raises concerns regarding VMT in the Lake Tahoe Basin. See Master Response 6 of this Final EIR.

- IO26-11 The comment suggests that the lack of any mitigation for the impact of increased traffic to the Lake Tahoe Basin (roadway segment of SR 267 from Brockway Summit to Kings Beach) is unacceptable, and that the Draft EIR must include appropriate mitigation. See response to comment SA3-1 regarding additional mitigation for roadway impacts. See Master Response 2 regarding the applicability of TRPA thresholds to the environmental analysis.

The EIR concludes that the intersection of SR 267 and SR 28 would operate at an acceptable level of service on both a project-specific and cumulative basis (see Draft EIR, pages 10-27 and 10-39). Thus, mitigation measures to address this intersection are not required. Nevertheless, the County’s CIP includes improvements to this intersection (see Table 10-14 on page 10-31 of the Draft EIR). The project would be required to pay these fees, and thus would pay its “fair share” towards the cost of these improvements.

The SR 267 road segment from the project entrance to SR 28 would operate at an unacceptable level of service on both a project-specific and cumulative basis (see Draft EIR

pages 10-29 and 10-43). As noted above, the project would pay the County's traffic impact fee, which would provide funding for improvements to SR 267. The projects listed on the County's CIP, however, do not include widening this segment of SR 267. Thus, paying these traffic fees would not provide funding for this particular improvement. This road segment is projected to operate at an unacceptable LOS with or without the project. If a fee program were in place to address this impact, then it would be appropriate to require the project to pay its fair share by paying this fee. In this instance, however, the adopted fee program does not include this improvement. Thus, there is no mechanism in place to collect fees to improve this road segment. Under such circumstances, it is appropriate to conclude that the impact is significant and unavoidable. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15162.4, subd. (a)(4) [mitigation measure must be roughly proportional to project's contribution to impact]; *Tracy First v. City of Tracy* (2009) 177 Cal.App.4th 912, 937-939 [absent adopted plan to improve intersections, city did not err in declining to require developer to pay portion of cost].)

- IO26-12 The comment discusses the visual resources conclusions and analysis of the Draft EIR and requests clarification of how deductions were made. See Master Response 4 regarding the visual assessment methodology. The comment also suggests that TRPA scenic guidelines standards are applicable to the project. As discussed in response to comment IO18-41 regarding the scenic evaluation, the proposed project is not subject to TRPA regulations or standards. Also see response to comment IO51-53
- IO26-13 The comment raises concerns regarding wildfire and emergency safety. See Master Response 9 regarding wildland fire, emergency evacuation, and the draft Emergency Preparedness and Evacuation Plan prepared as part of the MVWPSP.
- The comment also suggests that the Draft EIR does not address impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Please see response to comments IO26-5 and IO18-7.
- IO26-14 The comment states that Placer County is obligated to consult with TRPA. Consultation has occurred on numerous occasions. In the first instance, Placer County coordinated with TRPA on the MVWPSP when the original MVWPSP proposal included 112.8 acres within the Tahoe Basin. As explained in Draft EIR Section 1.5.3 (page 1-6),
- As part of the original MVWPSP prepared in 2014, a draft Area Plan was prepared for 112.8 acres of the West Parcel located within the Tahoe Basin watershed and therefore within the jurisdiction of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA). The Area Plan proposed to redesignate 112.8 acres of the West Parcel within the Basin to "Resort Recreation" under the TRPA Regional Plan, allowing up to 112 dwelling units on that portion of the site. In addition, 130 acres of Tahoe Basin land on the East Parcel were considered in the original MVWPSP.
- Although the proposed MVWPSP land use plan is no longer located within the Tahoe Basin and is therefore not under the jurisdiction of TRPA, Placer County has continued to consult with TRPA. TRPA received the revised NOP (dated February 27, 2015) as well as the Draft EIR (October 22, 2015). TRPA submitted a comment on the Draft EIR dated December 22, 2015 acknowledging the ongoing coordination; see letter RA1 and responses to comments RA1-1 through RA-3. Multiple meetings have occurred between Placer County and TRPA staff to address ongoing issues affecting both jurisdictions, including near-Basin effects of projects located outside the Tahoe Basin.
- The comment also incorporates a letter regarding the Brockway Campground. The Brockway Campground project is a proposal for which environmental review has not yet commenced. The Draft EIR considers the Brockway Campground proposal and other cumulative projects, as described in Section 4.2, "Cumulative Impact Analysis Methodology" and as shown on

Table 4-2, “Cumulative Projects List,” on page 4-5 of the Draft EIR. For further discussion regarding the Brockway Campground proposal, see Master Response 2 of this Final EIR.

The comment suggests that the Draft EIR does not address impacts to the Lake Tahoe Basin. Please see response to comments IO26-5 and IO18-7.

The comment also asserts that the Draft EIR should be recirculated. Please see Master Response 1.

IO26-15

The comment suggests that the Draft EIR did not provide appropriate mitigation measures for significant impacts. However, the comment does not provide evidence that the mitigation required in the Draft EIR is insufficient.

The comment also questions how the payment of traffic impact fees would mitigate traffic impacts. Please see response to comment IO6-8 regarding implementation of improvements identified in the Placer County CIP or Truckee TIF Program.

The comment states that the money paid under the County’s traffic impact fee program will not result in improvements within the Tahoe Basin. This statement is incorrect. The County’s CIP includes improvements to roads located within the Tahoe Basin (see Table 10-14 on page 10-31 of the Draft EIR). Because the project would be required to pay these fees, the project would contribute its fair share towards the cost of these improvements.

The comment states that under CEQA payment of traffic impact fees for such improvements is insufficient mitigation absent a guarantee that the listed improvement will be constructed. This statement is incorrect. (*Anderson First Coalition v. City of Anderson* (2005) 130 Cal.App.4th 1173, 1188; *Save Our Peninsula Committee v. Monterey County Bd. of Supervisors* (2001) 87 Cal.App.4th 99, 140.)

The comment also states that the project proponent had no response when questioned why Caltrans was not part of the MVWPSP project planning efforts. Public testimony by the project applicant may not reflect all of the analyses and consultation conducted for the Draft EIR. The EIR cites consultation with Caltrans in conducting the traffic analysis (see Section 10.1.1 on page 10-1 of the Draft EIR and response to comment IO18-13 in this Final EIR).

The comment suggests that the analysis of GHGs does not consider the Lake Tahoe Basin. As explained in Chapter 12, “Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change,” of the Draft EIR, impacts of greenhouse gas emissions and climate change are inherently cumulative. GHG emissions from one project cannot, on its own, result in changes in climatic conditions; therefore, the emissions from one project must be considered in the context of their contribution to cumulative global emissions. Nonetheless, the cumulative impact analysis provided in Section 12.3.5 of the Draft EIR (page 12-19) expands on project-specific impacts and discusses the project’s GHG emissions in the context of the cumulative project list, which include related projects within the Tahoe Basin. See also Master Response 7 regarding the analysis of GHGs.

The comment again suggests that the Draft EIR did not consider the Lake Tahoe Basin. Please see response to comments IO26-5 and IO18-7.

IO26-16

The comment raises concerns regarding the alternatives analysis in the Draft EIR. See Master Response 10 regarding the alternatives analysis. See response to comment IO41-41 regarding suggestions to connect the project site to Highlands View Drive.

- IO26-17 The comment suggests that the Draft EIR trip generation and impact analysis are flawed, citing an assessment from Mr. Neal Liddicoat (prepared for MAP and Sierra Watch, see letter IO28).
- The response to this comment is addressed in Master Response 5, which discusses the assumptions regarding proportion of full-time, permanent residents versus second homes used in the Draft EIR and the trip generation methodology. Also see responses to comment IO41-30 through IO41-49 in response to the assessment cited in this comment letter.
- IO26-18 The comment suggests that the Draft EIR should include an analysis of VMT. Please see Master Response 6, which discusses VMT.
- IO26-19 The comment states that the Draft EIR did not include coordination with Caltrans both on planning and with potential mitigation. This is factually incorrect. Coordination with Caltrans involved meetings and telephone coordination. Caltrans (along with Placer County) was consulted with regard to the study locations and facilities to be analyzed in the Draft EIR, and approved the study's scope, assumptions, and methods. Coordination with Caltrans also took place relative to evaluation of feasible traffic control options and details regarding signal retiming. Caltrans received the Draft EIR and submitted comments (see Letters SA2 and SA3). See also response to comment IO26-15, above.
- IO26-20 The comment questions the assumptions used in the analysis of full-time versus part-time (second home) residential units used in the Draft EIR. The comment does not provide data indicating that alternative assumptions should be used with respect to full-time versus part-time units, or describe what those alternative assumptions should be.
- Please see Master Response 5 regarding such assumptions.
- The comment also states that the assumptions used in the MVWPSP Draft EIR are inconsistent with the assumptions made for the Squaw Valley Draft EIR, particularly as they relate to the ITE trip generation for Recreational Homes, which is included in the MVWPSP study but is not considered in the Squaw Valley study.
- The Village at Squaw Valley Specific Plan EIR considered several possible ITE land use categories for determining the trip generation of that project's land uses. Ultimately, the land use category chosen for that study was Resort Hotel (ITE category 330) because it was the most applicable category for the proposed project. Note that the proposed Village at Squaw Valley project is for hotel/condo units, described as having hotel-like accommodations with a lobby, front desk, daily cleaning, and various on-site amenities. The MVWPSP residential land uses differ notably from the proposed Squaw Valley units in that they are not hotel-like in nature, but are very applicable to the land use category of Recreational Homes (ITE category 260), with the description in the ITE Trip Generation Manual, "dwellings are often second homes used by the owner periodically or rented on a seasonal basis."
- IO26-21 The comment raises concerns regarding cumulative impacts to biological resources, citing the Brockway Campground proposal and concerns regarding the baseline used for evaluating environmental impacts. The comment also states that the Draft EIR uses the conservation of the East Parcel as a substitute for analyzing impacts to the West Parcel. This is factually incorrect. Please see responses to comments IO26-2 and Master Response 2 regarding the Brockway Campground proposal. Please see responses to comments IO26-3 and IO26-4, above, and see Master Response 3 regarding the environmental baseline.
- As described in Master Response 3, the analysis of impacts to biological resources under each project alternative was based on potential effects relative to the *existing* physical conditions. The analysis describes and considers the whole of the proposed project, which

includes development on the West Parcel and conservation of the East Parcel. Nonetheless, for purposes of the Draft EIR analysis and significance conclusions, impacts on biological resources on the West Parcel were not treated as being offset or mitigated by benefits of preserving the East Parcel. For example, Draft EIR Impact 7-2 (Disturbance or loss of sensitive habitats) concludes that the loss or degradation of sensitive habitats on the West Parcel would be significant, independent of benefits gained through preserving the East Parcel. The Draft EIR concluded that the project's contribution to the cumulative impact on sensitive habitats (Cumulative Impact 7-7) would not be cumulatively considerable based on existing regulations and proposed mitigation to achieve a no-net-loss of sensitive habitats, including benefits of protecting habitat on the East Parcel. This analysis takes into account cumulative development that has been proposed in the region, including the Brockway Campground (see Draft EIR page 7-61).

IO26-22

The comment states that the biological resources analysis contains incomplete assessments and weak mitigation measures due to the lack of detailed survey data, and that conducting the environmental review before completing protocol-level surveys for special-status species is unacceptable. This statement is not true. The biological resources analysis was based on a combination of project-specific reconnaissance-level surveys and habitat mapping, and existing biological survey/detection data. The reconnaissance surveys, supplemented by other data sources and project-specific habitat mapping, are adequate and appropriate for determining a species' potential to occur in the study area. Using reconnaissance-level surveys and habitat suitability assessments to support environmental review is common and accepted practice for projects with large study areas, particularly for program-level environmental review where more specific project designs and project-level review would be completed in the future prior to implementation. In the Draft EIR, determining potential for occurrence and whether project implementation could affect a special-status species was based primarily on the types, extent, and quality of habitats (i.e., habitat suitability) in the study area observed during the surveys; the proximity of the study area to known extant occurrences of the species; and the regional distribution and abundance of the species (i.e., whether the project area overlapped with the species' known range). Any special-status species that could occur in the region and for which suitable habitat is present in the study area was conservatively assumed to potentially occur and be affected by project implementation, even though some of those species may in fact not use the project area or be affected. After more detailed project designs are completed and prior to construction of specific projects, protocol-level surveys for special-status species that may be affected will be completed, as described in Draft EIR Mitigation Measures 7-3, 7-5a, 7-5b, and 7-5c. In addition to establishing the pre-project survey requirements for special-status species, these measures specify a range of impact avoidance, minimization, and/or compensation requirements for special-status species determined to be present and affected in the project area. These measures would need to be implemented and relevant permits must be secured prior to project construction (as a condition of approval); however, completion of protocol-level surveys is not a requirement for certification of the EIR, particularly for a program-level environmental review. This approach is in accord with acceptable standards for environmental review.

The comment states the Draft EIR is inadequate because the US Army Corps of Engineers had not verified the wetlands delineation at the time the County released the Draft EIR. This statement is incorrect. For CEQA purposes, the information in the EIR regarding the presence of wetlands is adequate if supported by substantial evidence. This information does not need to be verified by another agency, or to follow a particular protocol, in order to be "substantial evidence." (*Save Round Valley Alliance v. County of Inyo* (2007) 157 Cal.App.4th 1437; *Association of Irrigated Residents v. County of Madera* (2003) 107 Cal.App.4th 1383, 1396.) In this case, the information on the presence of wetlands was obtained based on site visits by qualified biologists. Mitigation Measure 7-2a is designed to reflect the fact that the US

Army Corps of Engineers must, under the Federal Clean Water Act, verify the delineation, and that as part of the verification process it is not uncommon for the boundaries of jurisdictional features to be adjusted. The measure accounts for this possibility and is therefore appropriate.

The comment states preconstruction surveys are inappropriate for special-status birds, bats and Sierra Nevada beavers. The aim of this measure is to avoid disturbance to occupied nests, roosts, or dens. All these species are mobile. A nest that is occupied today may not be occupied a year from now. If surveys were performed today, they would not provide useful information for purposes of avoiding direct impacts when construction commences. The appropriate time to perform such surveys is shortly before construction commences. That is what the mitigation measures ensure would happen. Performing additional preconstruction surveys now, months or years before construction is to commence, would be a needless waste of resources. The courts have upheld such measures under similar circumstances. (*Save Panoche Valley v. San Benito County* (2013) 217 Cal.App.4th 503, 525.)

- I026-23 The comment asserts that the Draft EIR “significantly downplays impacts to the mule deer and protection of its habitat,” and suggests that mitigation measures protecting potential fawning habitat and migration corridors should be provided. The comment provides no evidence for why impacts to mule deer under the MVWPSP would be greater than those described in the Draft EIR, or why mitigation to protect potential fawning habitat and migration corridors as part of the MVWPSP would be required. The project applicant understands the importance and high value of the Loyalton-Truckee mule deer herd in the region, as described in the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR presents current information on known mule deer habitat use and movements relative to the project area, based on recent studies conducted by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and input from a CDFW biologist leading the studies, and analyzes potential effects of the proposed MVWPSP on mule deer based largely on that information. As required for the Draft EIR, potential impacts on biological resources were evaluated based specifically on the significance criteria described on pages 7-39 to 7-40. Regarding effects on mule deer and animal movement corridors, for purposes of the Draft EIR, an adverse effect alone does not necessarily constitute a significant impact; significance and the need to mitigate are based on the magnitude and intensity of the effect relative to existing conditions and were evaluated based specifically on the established significance criteria.
- I026-24 The comment summarizes the comments provided in the letter and suggests that the Draft EIR should be recirculated. See responses to comments I026-1 through I026-23. See also in Master Response 1 regarding recirculation.
- I026-25 The comment repeats a suggestion that the Draft EIR be recirculated. See Master Response 1. See responses to comments, above, addressing the concerns listed in this comment and letter.

Shirlee Herrington

I027

From: grandmalynn44 <grandmalynn44@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 22, 2015 10:12 AM
To: Placer County Environmental Coordination Services
Subject: Forest ridge line destruction

LETTER TO

Tahoe Regional Planning Agency

Placer County Board of Supervisors and TRPA The "Martis Valley West" proposal by East West Partners and Sierra Pacific Industries has exposed the lack of any definitive standards by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency or Placer County for the protection of the area's scenic forested ridgelines. The ridgelines in the Lake Tahoe area are one of its most outstandingly beautiful features and are a primary basis for its popularity and economic health. The ridgelines offer recreational opportunities, a chance to view wildlife and experience nature, and of course unparalleled views of Lake Tahoe and Martis Valley; they are also increasingly rare homes to and open-space corridors for wildlife.

Most towns that have any kind of scenic value protect their ridgelines. There are many more than can be mentioned here, but they include Nashville, Tennessee; Sun Valley, Idaho; Park City, Utah; Aspen, Colorado; and Santa Monica, California. If regulations banning ridgeline development exist in other areas, even those that don't have the outstandingly unique features of the Lake Tahoe area, why don't we?

The public has entrusted Placer County and the TRPA with protecting and preserving Tahoe's and Truckee's irreplaceable natural beauty and mountain environment. Vague and unenforceable references in regulations to "consider" ridgeline protections clearly aren't enough. By signing this petition, we are requesting that you institute clear and enforceable protections for the Tahoe area's ridgelines immediately.

Sincerely,
Lynn McKechnie
Tahoe area resident

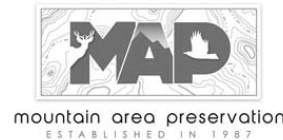
I027-1

I027

Lynn McKechnie
December 22, 2015

I027-1

The comment expresses opposition to the project due to effects on the ridgelines surrounding Lake Tahoe. See responses to comments I018-42 and I018-44 regarding ridgelines and the project's consistency with existing policies. Recommendations to local agencies to add new goals or policies to existing planning documents or to enact new regulations to preserve or protect specific resources is outside the purview of this EIR. However, as part of the Final EIR, the recommendations will be forwarded to the Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.



Stacy Wydra
Placer County Community Development Resource Agency
3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190
Auburn, CA 95603
RE: State Clearinghouse #2014032087

December 18, 2015

Dear Ms. Wydra:

Attached please find our comment letter prepared by the firm of *Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger* on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared for the Martis Valley West Parcel Project and Specific Plan (MVWP/SP).

Both Mountain Area Preservation and Sierra Watch maintain a long-term commitment to lasting conservation and good planning in Martis Valley. The MVWP and the Draft EIR, however, would represent a major step backward in the ongoing, collaborative effort to secure a better blueprint for the region.

The 7,568-acre SPI property stands as the last remaining piece of the planning puzzle in Martis Valley. Current proposals essentially divide the project into two pieces:

- The Eastside of Highway 267, where there is a clear consensus for permanent conservation – and now development – as reflected in the MVWP proposal; and
- The Westside of Highway 267, where proponents seek broad entitlements, in two different applications, for the MVWP and the Brockway Campground.

We applaud the ongoing commitment to protect the Eastside of the SPI property. But, as spelled out in our attached letter, inadequate review of the MVWP proposal itself, coupled with the attempt to divide the rest of the property into a piecemeal planning proposal with two different projects, runs counter to the letter of state law and will threaten over-development.

It is our hope that, through ongoing dialogue and effective planning, we can work together to help create an outcome that not only meets the standards of state law but, also, ensures appropriate land use development and priority conservation, worthy of the Martis Valley, Lake Tahoe, and the SPI property itself.

Our attached letter from *Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger* outlines numerous deficiencies within the MVWP Draft EIR, warranting the need to re-analyze and re-circulate CEQA specific chapters for adequacy under state law. The following items are a few of the areas of concern where more examination is necessary for CEQA compliance:

1028-1

- Project description improperly segments proposed development in the Lake Tahoe Basin Portion of the MVWP
- DEIR ignores CEQA mandated cumulative impact analysis for future foreseeable projects such as the Brockway Campground proposal
- DEIR assumes no biological impacts with the Westside parcel, due to the conservation of the Eastside parcel
- DEIR defers analysis and feasible mitigation measures for biological resources to the time of project construction
- DEIR fails to adequately analyze or mitigate significant visual impacts to the Martis Valley & Lake Tahoe Basin viewshed
- DEIR fails to analyze or mitigate significant traffic & circulation impacts i.e.
 - Winter trip generation is inaccurate & summer trip traffic is not identified
 - Projects overall trip traffic generation is underestimated
 - Level of Service for Project access entrance & SR 267 not identified correctly as a significant impact
 - Regional traffic impacts to Interstate-80 not analyzed
 - Impacts to public transportation not analyzed or mitigated
 - Impacts to public safety not identified or analyzed
 - No analysis of construction related traffic impacts
 - Cumulative traffic impacts not analyzed nor mitigated
 - Flaws in air quality & green house gas emission analysis due to errors in traffic analysis
- DEIR fails to evaluate the project's contribution to climate change, underestimates the projects green house gas emissions & fails to evaluate feasible mitigation
- DEIR fails to analyze or mitigate hazards for wildfire and emergency evacuation
- DEIR does not account for on-going drought & climate change in California
- DEIR does not analyze or mitigate impacts to hydrology and water quality
- DEIR analysis of project alternatives is inadequate

I028-1
cont

With these CEQA issues and additional deficiencies within the DEIR we respectfully request the County and applicant to revise and re-circulate the DEIR with adequate analysis and feasible mitigation measures. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the MVWP DEIR/SP. If you have questions concerning any of the items presented in our *Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger* letter and exhibits please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,



Alexis Ollar, MS & GISP
MAP Executive Director
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530.582.6751
734678.1



Tom Mooers
Executive Director, Sierra Watch
tmooers@sierrawatch.org
530.265.2849

I028

Alexis Ollar and Tom Mooers
December 18, 2015

I028-1

The comment summarizes and refers to the comment letter submitted by *Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger*. Please see responses to comment letter I041. As explained throughout the responses to the comments in letter I041, the analyses in the Draft EIR are adequate and in compliance with the requirements of CEQA. As discussed in Master Response 1 regarding recirculation, none of the conditions requiring recirculation of a Draft EIR, as specified in CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5, has occurred. The Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will take the commenter's opinions regarding the merits or qualities of the proposed MVWPSP into consideration when making decisions regarding the project.

Shirlee Herrington**1029**

From: Holly M <hollycc1098@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 21, 2015 3:27 PM
To: Placer County Environmental Coordination Services
Subject: Martis Valley Parcel Specific Plan DEIR

I am a new owner of condo at Carnelian Woods Town Homes, Carnelian Bay, CA. I am a widow who decided to move there after visiting my Daughter over the last 7 yrs, who is also an owner in this same complex. Carnelian Woods is a "slice of heaven" in an otherwise, too densely populated, over-built area -- at least that's my opinion of NW California side of Tahoe Basin.

Upon learning that Placer County is even considering allowing **new** development on the ridge above Carnelian Bay area is APPALLING!!! I am still in process of ~~moving~~ into & renovating my condo and spent a total of 3 months there this last summer/fall. In my opinion, traffic, infrastructure, safety of evacuation in case of emergency, just general services are over-burdened, strained in the NW corner of Tahoe Basin.

The roads from Carnelian Bay going to Tahoe City as well as Kings Beach area & Hwy 267 are literally choked (traffic at a stand still) from Friday through late afternoon on Sunday. If there was a major disaster where people had to leave immediately, it would be impossible. That's before any additional new development.

PLEASE, PLEASE VOTE "NO" on allowing this new development within the Tahoe Basin. I eventually will be a registered voter in Placer County, hopefully starting middle of 2016. Believe me, I will watch how voting goes down on this issue and cast my future votes accordingly.

I believe there is plenty of opportunity to renovate or replace existing developments, therefore allowing no need to tear up what is left of the pristine beauty that is the Tahoe Basin, straining the already over-burdened infrastructures. I am renovating my own 1970s condo, applied for necessary permits, etc.

Again, I ask you to say "NO" on the Martis Valley Parcel Specific Plan DEIR. Thank you for your time.

Holly Muenzer 707 218-5032
Mailing address for now: P O Box 1098, Crescent City, CA 95531
In process of renovating my condo within CWTA --& I HAVE A PERMIT!!
#35, 5101 N. Lake Blvd., Carnelian Bay, CA

1029-1

1029-2

1029-3

I029**Holly Muenzer**
November 23, 2015

- I029-1 The comment expresses opposition to the MVWPSP and cites concerns regarding traffic, infrastructure, and emergency evacuation. These subjects are addressed in the Draft EIR in the Chapter 10, "Transportation and Circulation," which describes the existing conditions and potential traffic and circulation effects associated with the MVWPSP; and Chapters 16, "Utilities," and 17, "Public Services and Recreation," which addresses existing conditions and potential impacts related to infrastructure. Finally, for concerns related to emergency evacuation, please see Master Response 9 of this Final EIR.
- I029-2 The comment expresses opposition to the MVWPSP on the ridge within the Tahoe Basin. Please see response to comment I018-7, which explains that no portion of the West Parcel is located within the Lake Tahoe Basin. However, as explained therein, the Draft EIR addresses potential impacts in the broader Truckee-Tahoe region, including within the Tahoe Basin, where applicable to the geographic scope of impacts (biological resources, traffic, visual resources, night lighting, air emissions, GHGs, population/ employment/ housing, wildfire hazards, emergency evacuation, recreation, and associated cumulative impacts).
- I029-3 The comment expresses opposition to the project due to effects within the Basin. See response to comment I029-2. The proposed project is not located in the Tahoe Basin. However, the Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will take the commenter's opinions regarding the merits or qualities of the proposed MVWPSP into consideration when making decisions regarding the project.

Shirlee Herrington**1030**

From: Virginia <giniaanne@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 27, 2015 1:25 PM
To: Placer County Environmental Coordination Services
Subject: In Response to the Martis Valley West Parcel proposal PGPA 20130080

To whom it may concern,

I am a former resident of but currently work in the North Tahoe Basin and I am emailing you now to voice my vehement opposition to this proposed development.

There are so many reasons why this development is ridiculous, but perhaps the BIGGEST reason is the location itself. Growing up in Tahoe Vista, I have seen HWY 267 closed dozens of times; multiple times per winter season. The traffic hazard alone would be risky. Cal Trans typically stops the traffic at the top of the Kings Beach residential area when the weather makes the pass too treacherous. If this development is approved...where would Cal Trans have their checkpoint? COULD they have a checkpoint? How would the roads be maintained to allow them to be passable for this new community? Who would pay for that? Do we have the infrastructure and resources to allow that?

1030-1

It sickens me to see the blatant swapping of zoning areas in this plan. I hate to think that any parcel in the basin could potentially be a playing card ready to be traded to the highest bidder. North Lake Tahoe isn't meant to become a Lahontan or a Martis Camp, a Vail or an Aspen. Its avoided development for decades, and for good reason. It maintains the charm of Tahoe. The dark night skies, the sweet, small town. The sense of community. To allow a development like this would be to set the stage for future developments. All...it takes...is one. One time. One allowance.

1030-2

Please don't let this be the ticket that turns North Lake Tahoe into the next over-developed exclusive gated playground for the rich and famous. There are enough of those in the world...

--

Virginia Munsterman
530.412.4211

I030**Virginia Munsterman**
October 27, 2015

I030-1

The comment expresses opposition to the MVWPSP and refers to potential adverse effects on traffic hazards. Draft EIR Chapter 10, "Transportation and Circulation," addresses traffic hazards. As discussed in Impact 10-7, "Safety-related impacts,"

[t]here would be times during winter storms when chain-controls would be in effect on SR 267 and some vehicles leaving the project and entering SR 267 would need to have a safe location to install chains on their vehicles. Because the project would include parking spaces or turnouts outside of the Caltrans right-of-way for the installation of chains before cars exit the project site, and would provide through signage and/or other means (e.g., electronic media) advanced notice of chain-control requirements, the project would not result in an adverse hazard or safety-related impact relative to project design features.

Caltrans owns, operates, and maintains most of the major roadways in the project area, including SR 267. Implementation of the project would not interfere with Caltrans' normal operations on SR 267. Maintenance of existing county and state roads would continue under the appropriate jurisdiction. Please also see response to comment I051-57.

I030-2

The comment expresses concern related to proposed zoning changes and the effects of new development. The comment is acknowledged. All issues raised in the comment are addressed in the document. The Placer County Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors will take the commenter's opinions regarding the merits or qualities of the proposed MVWPSP into consideration when making decisions regarding the project.

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